

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3218

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Title: An act relating to the procurement of new ferry vessels that carry no more than one hundred motor vehicles.

Brief Description: Requiring the procurement of new ferry vessels that carry no more than one hundred motor vehicles.

Sponsors: Representatives Clibborn, VanDeWege, Appleton, Liias, Rolfes, Kessler, Smith, Bailey, Kenney, McIntire, Seaquist and Hankins; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/4/08 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Washington State Department of Transportation to construct one or more new ferry vessels in Washington for service on routes that require a vessel that carries fewer than 100 motor vehicles.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Flannigan, Vice Chair; Appleton, Armstrong, Campbell, Dickerson, Eddy, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kristiansen, Loomis, Rolfes, Sells, Simpson, Smith, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove, Wallace, Warnick, Williams and Wood.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Ericksen, Ranking Minority Member; Schindler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Herrera and Rodne.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

Washington State Ferries (WSF) own four 80-year-old Steel Electric class vessels – the Quinalt, Klickitat, Illahee, and Nisqually. While active, these vessels predominantly served

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the Port Townsend-Keystone route and the San Juan Islands inter-island route. They were the only vehicle ferries in the WSF fleet capable of operating on the Port Townsend-Keystone route due to Keystone's narrow and shallow harbor.

In November 2007, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) ordered all four steel electric class vessels removed from service due to corrosion and pitting discovered in the hull of the vessels.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The intent section declares that an expedited procurement is required for the construction of new vessels to replace the steel electric class vessels and restore permanent auto and passenger service on routes previously served by steel electric class vessels.

The WSDOT is directed to construct one or more new ferry vessels for service on routes that require a vessel that carries fewer than 100 motor vehicles.

The vessel or vessels must be constructed within the boundaries of Washington, except for equipment furnished by the state and standard manufactured components, products, and systems. All warranty work on any vessel or vessels must also be performed in Washington, to the extent this is practicable.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Both the intent section and the section directing the WSDOT to construct one or more new vessels are modified to remove references to the Port Townsend-Keystone route and insert references to routes that require a vessel that carries fewer than 100 motor vehicles or routes that were previously served by steel electric class vessels.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The removal of the steel electric class vessels from service has had an acute effect on the businesses and individuals served by the Port Townsend-Keystone route. Action must be taken quickly to eliminate these effects.

This bill requires construction of replacement vessels in Washington in order to maintain a vibrant ship-building industry in the state. A ship-building industry capable of both building ferry vessels and keeping them in good repair. This procurement will bring new people into

the industry, allowing the industry to keep going into the future. In the past, the procure in Washington provisions have been placed in the statute governing each procurement.

Washington State Ferries will issue bids in two weeks for the construction of replacement vessels, and shipyards will have four weeks to respond. Without this bill, this time frame could increase if new shipyards need to be qualified to participate in the bidding.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jill Satran, Governor's Office; Steve Reinmuth, Washington State Department of Transportation; and Gordon Baxter, Puget Sound Metal Trades Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.